

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY

USMISSION USBERLIN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SOFIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY

S E C R E T PARIS 28054

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NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR FR UR

SUBJECT: TCHERVONENKO CALL AT ELYSEE: BREZHNEV WORKING
VISIT TO PARIS??

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR TCHERVONENKO PAID ONE HOUR CALL ON
PRESIDENT GISCARD SEPTEMBER 23. TCHERVONENKO TOLD PRESS
AFTERWARDS THAT VISIT PRIMARILY CONCERNED QUESTION OF
NEXT GISCARD-BREZHNEV MEETING" AND THAT QUESTION OF
DATE WILL NOW HAVE TO BE STUDIED IN LIGHT OF GISCARD'S
AND BREZHNEV'S CALENDARS. FREHCH PRESS CONCLUDED FROM
THIS (AND PERHAPS FROM INFORMED LEAKS) THAT CONVERSATION
TURNED ON WHO-WOULD-VISIT-WHOM AND ON WHAT BASIS, AND
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THAT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED IN PRINCIPLE ON EARLY

BREZHNEV WORKING VISIT TO PARIS.

2. THIS IMPRESSION WAS TO EXTENT CONFIRMED BY ELYSEE INTERNATIONAL STAFF CONTACT (PROTECT THOUGHTOUT), WHO TELLS US THAT DURING TCHERVONENKO'S FIRST CALL ON GUIRINGAUD SOVIET AMBASSADOR TRIED TO PERSUADE FRENCH TO ACCEPT GISCARD WORKING VISIT TO MOSCOW. GUIRINGAUD REFUSED. DETAILED ACCOUNT OF YESTERDAY'S TCHERVONENKO-GISCARD CONVERSATION NOT YET AVAILABLE. HOWEVER ELYSEE STAFF TOO ASSUMES TCHERVONENKO CAME TO OFFER ONLY OTHER POSSIBILITY, I.E., OF BREZHNEV VISIT TO PARIS. ACCORDING TO PROTOCOL, IT WOULD NOW BE BREZHNEV'S TURN TO COME FOR OFFICIAL VISIT TO FRANCE. HOWEVER, SOURCE IMPLIED THAT RENEWED WORKING VISIT, PERHAPS AGAIN AT RAMBOUILLET, SEEMS MUCH MORE LIELY, SINCE WORKING VISIT WOULD HAVE OBVIOUS ADVANTAGE FROM SOVIET VIEWPOINT OF OFFERING MORE DISCREET FORMAT, THUS AVOIDING MOST OF THE POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE IN PARIS WHICH WOULD IMPLY TO FRENCH PUBLIC SOVIET READINESS ENHANCE IMAGE OF GISCARD REGIME.

3. ELYSEE SOURCE INSISTED FRENCH HAD NOT MADE EFFORT TO RESORE MOVEMENT TO FRANCE-SOVIET CALENDAR AND THAT IT WAS SOVIETS WHO HAD TAKEN INITIATIVE. AS TO SOVIET REASONS, TWO POSSIBLE AND NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CONSIDERATIONS COME TO MIND. FIRST, BY GETTING VISIT OVER WITH SOON, SOVIETS AVOID CREATING INCREASINGLY NOTICEABLE GAP BETWEEN SUMMIT VISITS AND ATTENDANT PRESSURE FOR FRANCO-SOVIET ENCOUNTER DURING ELECTION PERIOD NEXT SPRING. SECONDLY, HAVING RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO WHAT ELYSEE SOURCE SAID FLATLY WAS "SCHMIDT ELECTION STUNT IN INVITING BREZHNEV TO FRG," SOVIETS COULD NOT VERY WELL SNUB FRENCH WITHOUT FURTHER AGGRAVATING RELATIONSHIP. ELYSEE SOURCE ADDED THIRD CONSIDERATION THAT BREZHNEV' HEALTH HAD PERHAPS TAKEN TURN FOR BETTER, LEADING TO BREZHNEV DECISION TO DISCHARGE NEW SERIES OF INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.

4. WE ARE REPORTING PRELIMINARY ELYSEE COMMENTS ON SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS BREZHNEV VISIT BY SEPTTEL. NEEDLESS
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SAY WE WILL PURSUE ENTIRE ISSUE IN PERIOD AHEAD.
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